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**Expanding the Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment (PLACE) Program**

In June of 2018, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted two motions to create pathways to permanent County employment for targeted populations with high barriers to employment, including County safety net clients. In response to those motions, the CEO partnered with the Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC) to create and implement the Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment (PLACE) Pilot program.

In the four years since it was established, the PLACE program, which now resides in the newly created Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), trained and ensured that 140 participants were hired by the County. Additionally, several recent participants have received conditional employment offers and are going through the hiring process. The six County Departments participating in the program – including the Departments of Health Services, Public Works, Beaches and Harbors, Parks and Recreation, Public Defender, and Child Support Services – hired participants into entry-level classifications including Custodian, Grounds Maintenance Worker I, Intermediate Clerk, Intermediate Typist Clerk, and Public Works Laborer. Every PLACE participant hired by the County qualified as having at least one barrier to employment. In addition,

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many had intersecting barriers and included individuals participating in CalWORKS, General Relief, and CalFresh, as well as Transition Age Youth, people currently or previously experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, and justice system-impacted individuals.

Like WERC itself, the PLACE program was created by the County to address specific priorities of the Board and County departments, including hiring challenges, pathways to the middle class for workers with barriers, and career advancement. The PLACE program is one of several that have been created by the Board for targeted populations, including the Career Development Intern Program, Veteran Intern Program, TempLA, and Career Youth Bridges Program. As the County emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, aggressive efforts need to be undertaken to ensure that historically marginalized communities, which are also among the hardest hit by the pandemic, make a rapid recovery and are not left even further behind. In their Pathways for Economic Resiliency Report, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) reported that those hardest hit by unemployment during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic included young workers under 34 years old, workers that identify as Black, Latinx, or Asian, women, and workers with only a high school education. Expanding and investing in High Road Training Partnerships aimed at providing access and opportunity toward family-sustaining careers in growth sectors will be a critical element for the recovery of economically hard-hit and marginalized communities. Through the PLACE Program, the County is demonstrating leadership as a high road employer and providing a model that can be employed by other high road employers across public and private sectors.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Instruct the Director of the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), in

collaboration with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC), to report back in 90 days with an implementation plan to reach the goal of 100 permanent County job placements under the PLACE program in FY2022-2023 and expand to 150 or more annually in subsequent years. The plan should include:

- a) Positions targeted for placement, including a plan to re-establish the County Crafts and Trades Apprenticeship that was developed in partnership with WERC as part of the PLACE program and paused due to the hiring freeze in place during COVID. The targeted positions should be informed by an update to the County data and analysis provided in the JUNE 2018 Workforce Development Strategies Report prepared by WERC;
- b) A plan for engaging departments not currently participating in the program;
- c) A comprehensive plan that builds upon existing County plans and strategies for recruiting participants with barriers to employment, including County client populations such as GAIN, GROW and Refugee Employment Program (REP) participants, Veterans, Transition Age Youth (TAY), unhoused and housing insecure individuals, and those impacted by the justice system. The plan should include strategies to engage and partner with community organizations and client-serving and public-facing County departments including, but not limited to, the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the County Library to assist in recruiting participants; and

- d) An evaluation of the program.
2. Instruct the Director of DEO, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), DHR, and WERC, to include in the 90 day report back a plan, timeline, budget, and evaluation of ongoing funding sources to make the PLACE program a permanent County program with targeted goals of 150 to 200 annual placements as part of the County's strategy to create pathways into County Careers for targeted populations;
  3. Instruct the DEO, in collaboration with DHR and WERC, to include a list of the County Departments participating in the PLACE program, along with the number of placements, in future bi-annual reports of the Career Pathways and High Road Employment Program;
  4. Instruct DHR to ensure that the Management Appraisal Performance Plan (MAPP) goals for Department Heads and Department Human Resource managers to include a goal related to their department's and/or the County's recruitment, hiring, and/or promoting of targeted populations, including but not limited to those individuals placed through programs such as PLACE, Career Development Intern Program, Veteran Intern Program, TempLA, and Career Youth Bridges Program; and
  5. Authorize the Director of DEO, or her designee, to enter into agreements with consultants, as needed, to carry out the expansion of the PLACE program, including agreements with community organizations to provide outreach and recruitment among communities and populations historically impacted by high levels of unemployment, including those that were most severely impacted by COVID-19.